

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF SICILY'S 1976 VOTE

1. SUMMARY: THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS CAME OUT AS THE ONLY WINNERS OF THE REGIONAL CONTEST ON JUNE 20-21: PLUS TEN SEATS TOTAL 39) IN THE 90-DEPUTY REGIONAL ASSEMBLY. ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNISTS INCREASED THEIR ELECTORAL STRENGTH BY SIX PERCENTAGE POINTS, THE PCI'S ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATION REMAINED THE SAME AS THAT OF 1971: 24 DEPUTIES. THE GREAT LOSERS WERE THE MISSINI, THE SOCIALISTS AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THE NEW REGIONAL ASSEMBLY CAN CHOOSE BETWEEN A CENTER-LEFT DC-PSI-PRI-PSDI) ALIGNMENT WITH A GENEROUS NINE-VOTE MARGIN AND EVEN A CENTRIST DC-PRI-PSDI-PLI) ALIGNMENT WITH A ONE-

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VOTE MARGIN. THERE ARE NO RADICALS NOR PROLETARIANS IN THE NEW ASSEMBLY. BUT FOUR WOMEN, ALL ELECTED ON THE PCI TICKET, FOR THE FIRST TIME ENTER WHAT HAS BEEN AN ALL-MALE LEGISLATURE. THE RESULTS FULLY DEMONSTRATED THAT TALKING OF PUBLIC MORALITY IN SICILY AMOUNTS TO DEBATING THE SEX OF THE ANGELS. IN FACT, THERE WERE NO ROSSI DI MONTELEA AND ALL THE OLD-TIMERS GOT THE VOTES. A MAJORITY OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC DEPUTIES FAVOR THE CONTINUATION OF LEGISLATIVE COLLABORATION WITH THE PCI AS ESTABLISHED IN THE PAST LEGISLATURE
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IN SPITE OF THE WISHES OF THE ELECTORATE TO THE CONTRARY. END OF

SUMMARY.

2. INTRODUCTION: THE THREE MAIN FEATURES OF THE SICILIAN VOTE OF JUNE 20-21 ARE: 0)) THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS EMERGE AS THE BIG WINNERS AND PUSH BACK THE NIGHTMARE OF 1971, WHEN FEAR OF REFORM TRANSFERRED LARGE BLOCS OF VOTES FROM THE DC TO THE MSI-DN. (2) THE PCI, DISAPPOINTED BY ITS MODEST SICILIAN GAINS IN 1975, REGISTERS A NET EXPANSION OF SIX PERCENTAGE POINTS, IN LINE WITH THE NATIONAL RESULT. (3) THE NATIONWIDE POLARIZATION DRAINS VOTES AWAY FROM THE BUFFER PARTIES: THE PSI AND PRI BEND IN DIFFERENT DEGREE WHILE PSDI AND PLI SHRIVEL UP.
3. SICILY, PREVIOUSLY AN ELECTORAL ISLAND, IS NOW CAUGHT IN THE

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POLITICAL WAKE OF THE NATION, BUT THE SICILIAN VICTORY OF THE DC IS MORE DECISIVE WITH THE SMALLER PARTIES PAYING THE PRICE. THE GAP BETWEEN THE DC AND THE PCI IS STILL CONTAINED WITHIN A SAFE MARGIN WITH 14 POINTS AT THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY. WHILE A NUMBER OF FRESHMEN WERE ELECTED TO THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE "RINNOVAMENTO" WAS MORE APPARENT THAN SUBSTANTIAL. ALMOST ALL DC OUTGOING POLITICIANS WERE RECONFIRMED AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS. CONTROVERSIAL PERSONALITIES WERE TOP VOTE-GETTERS, SOME VERY CAPABLE CANDIDATES DID NOT MAKE IT AT ALL. SICILY HAD NO ROSSI DI MONTELERA.

4. THE NEW REGIONAL ASSEMBLY: AT THE REGION, THE DC WENT FROM 29 TO 39 DEPUTIES. THE PCI RETAINED ITS 24 DEPUTIES, EVEN THOUGH IT GAINED 200,000 VOTES. FEAR OF COMMUNISM AND A WELL-CONTRIVED ANTI-FASCIST WITCH-HUNT RESULTED IN THE TOPPLING OF THE MSI-DN FROM 15 DOWN TO 9 DEPUTIES. THE PSI GOES FROM 12 TO 10 DEPUTIES, THE PSDI FROM 4 TO 2 AND THE PLI FROM 3 TO 2. THE REPUBLICANS ADDED ONE SEAT TO THEIR PREVIOUS THREE, EVEN THOUGH THEIR VOTING STRENGTH DROPPED FROM 4.7 TO 3.3 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE. THE RADICALS AND DEMOCRAZIA PROLETARIA POLLED 0.6 PERCENT EACH, WHILE THE LISTE LAICHE WERE UNFORTUNATE.
5. THE MATHEMATICS OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY ARE REASSURING. THE CENTER-

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LEFT FORMULA (THEN ONLY SOLUTION POSSIBLE) COULD COUNT ON A THREE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VOTE MARGIN IN THE OLD ASSEMBLY, WHEREAS, THE NEW ASSEMBLY CAN CHOOSE BETWEEN A CENTER-LEFT ALIGNMENT WITH A GENEROUS 9-VOTE MARGIN AND EVEN A CENTRIST ALIGNMENT WITH A ONE-VOTE MARGIN.

6. OF THE 39 DC DEPUTIES, TWELVE ARE FOLLOWERS OF GULLOTTI, SIX ARE FOLLOWERS OF RUFFINI'S INIZIATIVA POPOLARE, SIX BELONG TO THE FORZE NUOVE FACTION, FIVE TO THE IMPEGNO DEMOCRATICO, TWO ARE MOROTEI AND SEVEN ARE FANFANIANI. ONE IS INDEPENDENT; THE PERSONAL PHYSICIAN OF THE CARDINAL OF PALERMO. OF THE ABOVE ONLY

THE FANFANIANI ARE STILL OPPOSED TO A CONTINUATION OF LEGISLATIVE COLLABORATION WITH THE PCI ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN ESTABLISHED IN THE PAST LEGISLATURE.

7. FORTY-TWO OF THE 90 NEW ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ARE FRESHMEN. THE DC HAS 24 NEW DEPUTIES OUT OF 39, INCLUDING THE CARDINAL'S DOCTOR: THE PSI, FIVE OUT OF TEN; THE PLI'S TWO DEPUTIES ARE BOTH NEW. THE PCI HAS 13 FRESHMEN OUT OF 24. FOUR WOMEN, ALL ELECTED ON THE PCI TICKET, FOR THE FIRST TIME ENTER WHAT WAS AN ALL-MALE ASSEMBLY; MEDICAL DOCTOR MARINA MARCONI-CAUSI; 22-YEAR-OLD FRANCESCA MESSANA; TERESA GENTILE, GRANDAUGHTER OF THE IDEALIST/FASCIST PHILOSOPHER GIOVANNI GENTILE; AND ADRIANA LAUDANI, A PROMINENT "CATTOLICA DEL

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DISSENSO." THE OTHER PCI FRESHMEN COME FROM THE PARTY RANKS. THE NEW CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND SOCIALISTS ARE FORMER CITY ADMINISTRATORS OR HOLDERS OF SOTTOGOVERNO POSITIONS, MOST OF THEM WEATHERED POLITICIANS.

8. SICILY'S NEW REPRESENTATION TO THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT: MINISTER GIOVANNI GIOIA AND ANTONINO GULLOTTI WERE THE TOP VOTE GETTERS IN WESTERN AND EASTERN SICILY RESPECTIVELY FOLLOWED BY ATTILIO RUFFINI AND CISL LEADER VITO SCALIA. THE LATTER SCORED AN IMPORTANT PERSONAL SUCCESS, BUT CREATED SUCH RESENTMENT THAT A COUPLE OF CISL LEADERS IN CATANIA RESIGNED. GIOVANNI SILVIO COCO, MEMBER OF THE CONSIGLIO SUPERIORE DELLA MAGISTRATURA AND PROFESSOR OF CIVIL LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PALERMO, WAS ELECTED SENATOR IN CALTANISSETTA. HE IS THE ONLY SICILIAN DC "HOMO NOVUS" TO THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT. THE OTHER DC FRESHMEN SIMPLY CHANGED POLITICAL HATS. THE PCI DID BETTER, SENDING - AMONG OTHERS - ARTIST RENATO GUTTUSO, JUDGE TOMMASO AULETTA, AND PROFESSOR GIOVANNI GIUDICE, DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF SCIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PALERMO TO THE SENATE. YOUNG AND SUCCESSFUL PCI REGIONAL SECRETARY ACHILLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OCCHETTO WON HIS FIRST BID FOR NATIONAL DEPUTY.

9. FROM 33.3 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN THE REGIONAL ELECTION OF 1971

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TO 38.8 IN 1975, THE DC HIT ITS HIGHEST SICILIAN SCORE, 42.2 PERCENT, IN THE ELECTION FOR THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. FOR THE SENATE AND THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS GOT A LITTLE LESS: 39.9 PERCENT AND 40.83 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY. THESE DIFFERENCES WERE THE RESULT OF CROSS-OVER VOTING, HIGHLY PRACTICED THIS TIME, AND REVEALS HOW INEXACT IS THE ASSUMPTION THAT YOUTH VOTES FOR THE EXTREMES ONLY.

10. A CLOSER ANALYSIS OF THE SICILIAN VOTE BRINGS OUT A COUPLE OF INTERESTING POINTS. FOR INSTANCE, IN THE HEAVILY-INDUSTRIALIZED

PROVINCE OF SIRACUSA, THE PCI SHOT UP TO 34.6 PERCENT (FROM 1972'S 27.1 PERCENT) AS OPPOSED TO THE DC'S SCORE OF 35.2 PERCENT. IN THE CITY OF MESSINA, THE PCI HAS THE LEAST APPEAL: 15.7 PERCENT AGAINST THE DC'S 46.5 PERCENT.

11. THE OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION OF THE SENATORS AND DEPUTIES ELECTED IN SICILY WAS DELAYED BY, AMONG OTHER REASONS, THE APPELLATE PROCEEDINGS OF THOSE WHO FELT VICTIMS OF MISCALCULATIONS AND THOSE WHO FELT THEY WERE BETRAYED BY THEIR PARTY. A DC LAWYER FROM ENNA MANAGED TO OCCUPY AND TAKE OVER BRIEFLY THE LOCAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE DC AS A PROTEST AGAINST HIS FELLOW PARTY MEMBERS WHEN HE FAILED ON HIS ELECTORAL BID.

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12. COMMENT: THE SICILIAN VOTE AT LARGE SEEMINGLY DEMONSTRATED THAT THE LOCAL VOTERS SHARE MACHIAVELLI'S MAXIM WHICH SAYS THAT "GLI STATI NON SI REGGONO CON I PATERNOSTRI." MORAL JUDGEMENTS DID NOT CROSS THEIR MINDS IN THE VOTING BOOTH SINCE THEY INTERPRETED THE JUNE 1976 VOTE AS A REFERENDUM BETWEEN THE DC AND THE PCI, IGNORING THE SMALLER PARTIES. THE REPUBLICANS, WHO FARED WELL ELSEWHERE, DID NOT ENTIRELY ESCAPE THE FATE OF THE OTHER "IN-BETWEENS", AND LOST VOTES.

13. IN 1971, A SPECIAL COMMITTEE FORMED BY ELEMENTS OF LOCAL CONFAGRICOLTURA AND CONFINDUSTRIA RALLIED ITS ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL ENERGIES TO THE MSI-DN'S COLORS, GIVING ALMIRANTE A STUNNING VICTORY OVER THE DC IN SICILY. IN 1976, THE SAME GROUPING TURNED ITS EFFORTS TOWARD THE DC. AGAIN THE RESULTS

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SPEAK FOR THIS COMMITTEE'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE SO-CALLED INDEPENDENT VOTE, NOT ENOUGH TO CREATE A NEW PARTY BUT SUFFICIENT TO TILT THE BALANCE IN ONE OR THE OTHER DIRECTION (SEE PALERMO'S 0254 AND 0269).

14. SICILIAN VOTERS GAVE THE DC A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP AND AMPLE MANEUVERING SPACE IN THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY. IN THE COURSE OF THE CAMPAIGN, IT WAS ALL TOO OFTEN DEMONSTRATED THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SICILIAN DC HARP STRIKES ANTI-COMMUNIST NOTES. HOWEVER AS THINGS STAND AT THE REGION IN THIS EARLY POST-ELECTION STAGE, IT APPEARS THAT THE DC WILL ADVANCE TOWARD THE CONFRONTO WITH THE PCI AT THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY, FOR THE REASONS THAT WE HAVE MENTIONED AT LENGTH IN OUR PRE-ELECTION ANALYSES. NOW ONE MORE FACTOR IN FAVOR OF CONFRONTO WITH THE PCI HAS EMERGED, ROME IS MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION. ONCE AGAIN SICILY HAS ANTICIPATED NATIONAL TRENDS, IN SPITE OF THE WISHES OF ITS ELECTORATE.

15. TWO CHARTS, ONE COMPARING 1976 AND 1971 REGIONAL ELECTIONS RESULTS, AND THE OTHER COMPARING 1972 AND 1976 NATIONAL CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND SENATE RESULTS WITH 1975 PROVINCIAL RESULTS, WILL BE TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY BY OM.
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